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Letter dated 20 February 2018 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose herewith a statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine on the fourth anniversary of the beginning of the military aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine (see annex).

I would appreciate your kind assistance in having the present letter and its annex distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 34 (a), and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yuriy **Vitrenko**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex to the letter dated 20 February 2018 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine on the fourth anniversary of the beginning of the Russian Federation military aggression against Ukraine

20 February 2018

On February 20, 2014, the Russian Federation initiated a pre-planned military aggression against Ukraine, which resulted in the temporary illegal occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, their attempted annexation and Russia's spreading of the international armed conflict in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine. These criminal acts have taken the lives of more than 10.000 people, led to the colossal destruction of the region and driven almost 1.8 million Ukrainians from their homes as internally displaced persons.

The Russian occupation authorities in total disregard of international law resort to large-scale and serious human rights violations on the occupied territories in attempts to break and subdue those who disagree with an aggressive Kremlin policy. Russia blatantly disregards the Order delivered on this case by the International Court of Justice. Russia directly organizes and encourages its proxies to carry out similar activities in certain areas of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions.

The occupying state resorts to taking Ukrainian citizens hostage and as a result of fabricated cases dozens of people are illegally detained in Russia and in the temporarily occupied territories of Crimea and Donbas. Their release remains one of the main priorities of Ukraine and the international community.

The international community is unanimous in its condemnation of these illegal acts by the Russian aggressor. This is evidenced by numerous decisions of the partner states of Ukraine, United Nations, Council of Europe, OSCE, European Union, NATO and other international organizations.

Ukraine is grateful to its international partners for their explicit stance in favor of protection and restoration of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

A UN peacekeeping mission, deployed throughout the occupied territory of Donbas, including the areas near the temporarily uncontrolled sections of the Ukrainian-Russian border, should become an effective tool for the restoration of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine calls upon the partners to use all appropriate means in order to prevent the escalation of the international armed conflict in the territory of Ukraine caused by the aggressive Kremlin policy; to deploy a UN peacekeeping mission; to force Russia to stop its aggression, human rights violations and support for terrorist activities, to halt the occupation of Crimea and invaded territories of Ukraine's Donbas, as well as to compensate for the damage caused in full.